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Nation Equity: Incidental Emotions in Country-of-Origin Effects

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Different from past research on country-of-origin effects that has focused on cognitive factors, this article examines the impact of incidental emotions and cognitive appraisals associated with these emotions on country-of-origin effects. Experiment 1 compared anger and sadness and demonstrated that country of origin influenced evaluations only in the angry (vs. sad) condition where human (vs. situation) control was high. Experiment 2 further identified the effects of agency control using a different emotion, frustration. Based on these observations, this article suggests that, like brands, countries also have equity associated with them, termed "nation equity," that has both performance and emotional components.

The effect of country of origin on product evaluations has been well documented. Several cognitive factors such as processing goals and time delay moderate country-of-origin effects on subsequent product evaluations (Gürhan-Canli and Maheswaran 2000b; Hong and Wyer 1989, 1990). Yet, other findings suggest affective influences. For example, featuring Japan as the country of origin led to favorable perceptions regardless of product quality for ethnocentric Japanese consumers (Gürhan-Canli and Maheswaran 2000a). In contrast, Chinese consumers in Nanjing, an enduring symbol of Japanese occupation, might not purchase Japanese products because of animosity toward Japan (Klein, Ettenson, and Morris 1998). Thus, the emotions consumers feel toward a country may be a consequence of historical events and be independent of the product, yet, they may subsequently influence the use of country of origin in product evaluations.

Recent research has shown that emotions have cognitive consequences or appraisal dimensions associated with them. For example, happiness is associated with certainty and hope is associated with uncertainty appraisal dimensions. More important, these appraisal dimensions systematically influence the effect of specific emotions on processing (Tiedens and Linton 2001). We examine how the agency-control appraisal dimension influences the use of country of origin in evaluations by featuring three discrete incidental emotions—anger, sadness, and frustration—that vary along the agency-control dimension.

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THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Country-of-Origin Effects

Several studies documented that favorable or unfavorable evaluations of a country associated with a product lead to corresponding favorable or unfavorable evaluations of the product (Gürhan-Canli and Maheswaran 2000b; Hong and Wyer 1989, 1990; Maheswaran 1994). In addition, past research shows that motivational (e.g., involvement) or cognitive (i.e., capacity) factors moderate country-of-origin effects. For example, Gürhan-Canli and Maheswaran (2000b) demonstrate that the processing goal and the type of information will determine whether country of origin is used in evaluations.

The dual-process models of persuasion have served as a theoretical basis for understanding country-of-origin effects (Chaiken 1980; Petty and Cacioppo 1979). Most early research has assumed that information processing is driven by the goal of forming accurate judgments, that is, accuracy motivation. Accuracy-motivated people are likely to engage in objective, systematic processing that will draw attention to the message details and minimize the impact of heuristics. In contrast, when people are not accuracy motivated, they tend to engage in heuristic processing, and country of origin has been shown to influence evaluations under such limited processing (Agrawal and Maheswaran 2005b; Eagly and Chaiken 1993).

Incidental Emotions

Past research has shown that incidental emotions may influence message persuasion (Bodenhausen, Sheppard, and Kramer 1994; Tiedens and Linton 2001). The positive or negative valence of the mood state has been extensively shown to influence subsequent evaluations of a target (Barone 2005). While generalized mood has been implicated in persuasion, relatively little attention has been focused on more specific emotions. Recent research has suggested that specific emotions within a more general mood state may have differential effects on persuasion. For example, anger and sadness, emotions with negative valence, have asymmetric effects on processing. Anger has been shown to induce heuristic processing, and sadness leads to systematic processing (Bodenhausen et al. 1994). More important, the observed differences among similarly valenced specific emotions have been attributed to the cognitive consequences or the appraisal dimensions (e.g., uncertainty or agency) associated with them (Lerner and Keltner 2000; Tiedens and Linton 2001). For example, fear, an emotion that is associated with risk, has been shown to have an incidental effect on risk perceptions in a subsequent situation (DeSteno et al. 2000; Lerner and Keltner 2000). Despite this growing interest in emotions and persuasion, relatively little research has examined the effects of emotions that are incidental to the message on persuasion. More important, the process mechanisms by which discrete emotions interact with message features (e.g., country of origin) to influence persuasion are not yet understood (Aaker and Williams 1998; Agrawal and Maheswaran 2005a).

Hypotheses

We build on research on discrete emotions (Lerner and Keltner 2000; Tiedens and Linton 2001) and argue that emotions varying on the dimension of agency control (human control or situation control) can influence the use of country of origin on evaluations. We examine anger and sadness, emotions that differ in terms of agency attribution (Smith and Ellsworth 1985). People who are angry feel strongly that other people can influence the situation or are responsible for the situation. Hence, angry people tend to blame someone else (human factors) for negative consequences. In contrast, sad people tend to believe that the event is beyond human control and are more prone to attribute negative consequences to situational characteristics. The agency attribution related to an incidental emotion also influences the weight given to human factors (vs. situational factors) in a subsequent judgment (Keltner, Ellsworth, and Edwards 1993). For the same event (e.g., you miss an important flight), people who are angry are more likely to perceive other people (e.g., terrible cab driver) as the causal agent in such event, whereas people who are sad are more likely to perceive situational factors (e.g., bad traffic) as the causal agent.

In our research, consumers are asked to evaluate a product and are given the country of origin (source) of the product and the product description. Angry participants are expected to give more weight to human factors. This implies that they are more likely to attribute product performance to people who they think are responsible for manufacturing the product. Since the country where the product originates is featured in the information given to participants, they will hold the country responsible for its products. Thus, their product evaluations would be greatly influenced by the favorableness of the country-of-origin information. In contrast, sad participants are anticipated to give less weight to human factors, and thus, country of origin will only receive minimal attention.

H1: In the anger condition, participants will evaluate a product more favorably when its country-of-origin information is favorable (vs. unfavorable). Whereas in the sad condition, country-of-origin information will not affect their evaluations.

We also examine the proposed agency differences in the attribution of responsibility and expect that angry participants perceive a high degree of human control while sad participants tend to believe the situation is beyond human control.

H2: In the anger (vs. sad) condition, perceptions of the human control will be higher, and perceptions of the situation control will be lower.

Cognitive responses would provide convergent evidence for agency-related processes that form the basis of country-of-origin effects. If angry participants focus on country of origin, then they should elaborate more on the country of origin and generate more country-related thoughts. In addition, the valence of the country-of-origin-related thoughts would be more favorable in response to a favorable (vs. unfavorable) country of origin. In contrast, while country of origin may also be scrutinized in the sad condition, it is less likely to be elaborated on since it would have a relatively low diagnostic value (Maheswaran 1994).

H3: In the anger (vs. sad) condition, participants will generate more country-of-origin-related thoughts. The valence of country-of-origin-related thoughts will be more favorable when country-of-origin information is favorable (vs. unfavorable). In contrast, participants in the sad (vs. anger) condition will generate more attribute-related thoughts.

EXPERIMENT 1

Method

Two hundred and ten participants received partial course credit for participating in small group sessions. They were randomly assigned to conditions in a 2 (emotion: sad vs. anger) × 2 (country of origin: Japan vs. Taiwan) × 2 (description: superior vs. inferior) between-subjects design. Participants learned that they would be participating in two unrelated studies. The first study manipulated emotion by

asking the participants to write down an emotional experience. The second study featured a new digital camera (model SDM 1500) ostensibly manufactured in either Taiwan or Japan. The participants subsequently read a report prepared by an independent agency that depicted the camera as being either superior or inferior to two leading brands. Then, the participants proceeded to complete the dependent measures. After an open-ended suspicion probe, participants were debriefed.

Independent Variables. Emotion was induced by asking participants to recall and reexperience an event that made them very sad (angry) and then describe this event in great detail by including as many concrete, vivid, experiential aspects as possible (Lerner et al. 2003; Tiedens and Linton 2001). Japan and Taiwan were featured as the countries of origin based on a pretest ($M_{\text{Japan}} = 6.39$, $M_{\text{Taiwan}} = 3.98$; $F(1, 36) = 89.49$, $p < .001$). The superior (inferior) description featured the target camera as better than (not as good as) two competing brands. Specifically, the camera was represented as superior in resolution, memory, zoom, and shutter, equivalent in the signal/noise ratio, and inferior in size.

Dependent Measures. All dependent variables, except for cognitive responses, were assessed using scales anchored by one and seven. After writing about their emotional experiences, participants responded to a few appraisal measures that generated an uncertainty index ($\alpha = .69$), a human-control index ($\alpha = .79$), and a situation-control measure (Smith and Ellsworth 1985). Participants evaluated the target camera on three seven-point scales anchored by "positive" and "negative," "not at all favorable" and "very favorable," and "good" and "bad." These items were averaged to form an evaluation index ($\alpha = .90$). Then, participants were given 3 minutes to list any thoughts that came to their minds while reading about the camera. Two independent raters categorized these thoughts as country of origin related or attribute related (C, A) and as positive, negative, or neutral (+, −, or 0; Maheswaran and Chaiken 1991). Interrater agreement was 95%, and the discrepancies were resolved by discussion. Some examples are "Japanese products must be of a good quality" (C+), "It is made in Taiwan" (C0), "It is a Taiwanese brand hence [it] may not be reliable" (C−), "I really like the extra memory" (A+), "It appears too heavy" (A−), and "How much does it cost?" (A0).

As a manipulation check for descriptions, participants rated the extent to which the target product was portrayed as "superior" and "inferior" to leading brands, having "many" and "few positive" and "few" and "many negative" attributes. These items were averaged to form a superiority index ($\alpha = .90$). Participants also rated the extent to which they endorse each of 10 statements as a manipulation check of emotions (Lerner and Keltner 2001). A sadness index ($\alpha = .83$) and an anger index ($\alpha = .73$) were generated based on their ratings. Age, gender, and ethnicity were indicated in the end.

Results

Manipulation Checks. An ANOVA on emotion measures revealed only main effects of emotion. Participants in the sad (vs. anger) condition reported greater sadness ($M_{\text{sad}} = 4.16$ vs. $M_{\text{anger}} = 3.42$; $F(1, 200) = 12.65$, $p < .001$) and less anger ($M_{\text{sad}} = 2.52$ vs. $M_{\text{anger}} = 3.84$; $F(1, 198) = 38.95$, $p < .001$). An ANOVA on the superiority index revealed only a main effect of description ($M_{\text{sup}} = 5.29$ vs. $M_{\text{inf}} = 3.27$; $F(1, 202) = 207.10$, $p < .001$). No differential effects were observed on gender and age as covariates.

Evaluations. An ANOVA on the evaluation index yielded a significant main effect of product description ($F(1, 201) = 96.67$, $p < .001$) and a significant emotion by country-of-origin interaction ($F(1, 201) = 6.63$, $p = .01$). Consistent with hypothesis 1, the evaluations were significantly higher when the country of origin was Japan (vs. Taiwan) for angry participants ($M_{\text{Japan}} = 5.14$ vs. $M_{\text{Taiwan}} = 4.65$; $F(1, 201) = 6.22$, $p < .05$) but did not differ for sad participants ($M_{\text{Japan}} = 4.60$ vs. $M_{\text{Taiwan}} = 4.82$; $F(1, 201) = 1.30$, $p > .25$).

Appraisal Measures. An ANOVA revealed no significant effect for the uncertainty index (p's $> .20$). Consistent with hypothesis 2, the human-control index was significantly higher in the anger (vs. sad) condition ($M_{\text{anger}} = 4.80$ vs. $M_{\text{sad}} = 3.56$; $F(1, 202) = 35.14$, $p < .001$). The situation-control measure was significantly higher in the sad (vs. anger) condition ($M_{\text{sad}} = 4.32$ vs. $M_{\text{anger}} = 3.08$; $F(1, 202) = 21.74$, $p < .001$).

Cognitive Responses. An ANOVA on the total number of thoughts yielded no significant effects ($M = 5.23$; $p > .20$). Consistent with hypothesis 3, angry (vs. sad) participants generated more country-of-origin-related thoughts ($M_{\text{anger}} = .25$ vs. $M_{\text{sad}} = .15$; $F(1, 197) = 2.79$, $p < .10$) and fewer attribute-related thoughts ($M_{\text{anger}} = 1.63$ vs. $M_{\text{sad}} = 2.16$; $F(1, 197) = 4.42$, $p < .05$). An ANOVA on the valenced index of country-of-origin-related thoughts (positive − negative thoughts) revealed an emotion by country-of-origin interaction ($F(1, 197) = 4.38$, $p < .05$). For angry participants, the valence of country-of-origin-related thoughts was more favorable if the product was manufactured in Japan (vs. Taiwan; $M_{\text{Japan}} = .09$ vs. $M_{\text{Taiwan}} = -.30$; $F(1, 197) = 25.64$, $p < .001$). For sad participants, such difference was not significant ($M_{\text{Japan}} = .05$ vs. $M_{\text{Taiwan}} = -.06$; $F(1, 197) = 1.97$, $p > .15$). The means and standard deviations are presented in table 1.

Discussion

In sum, this experiment demonstrated that sadness and anger differentially influence the use of country-of-origin information in product evaluations. Angry participants were more influenced by the favorableness of the country-of-origin information. In contrast, country of origin did not influence the evaluations of sad participants reliably.

TABLE 1

EVALUATIONS (STANDARD DEVIATIONS) AND THOUGHTS AS A FUNCTION OF EMOTION, COUNTRY OF ORIGIN, AND PRODUCT DESCRIPTION: EXPERIMENT 1

	Sad				Anger			
	Superior description		Inferior description		Superior description		Inferior description	
	Japan	Taiwan	Japan	Taiwan	Japan	Taiwan	Japan	Taiwan
Evaluations	5.57 (.81)	5.40 (.58)	3.63 (1.10)	4.23 (1.27)	5.73 (.98)	5.17 (.95)	4.55 (.96)	4.13 (.99)
Country-of-origin-related thoughts	.14 (.35)	.20 (.40)	.00 (.00)	.26 (.52)	.08 (.27)	.39 (.58)	.09 (.29)	.44 (.64)
Valenced index of country-of-origin-related thoughts	.10 (.31)	−.08 (.57)	.00 (.00)	−.04 (.19)	.09 (.19)	−.17 (.39)	.09 (.29)	−.41 (.64)
Attribute-related thoughts	1.93 (1.58)	2.16 (1.72)	2.35 (2.04)	2.22 (1.83)	2.00 (1.98)	1.15 (1.51)	1.83 (1.64)	1.59 (1.67)
Valenced index of attribute thoughts	.00 (1.49)	.96 (1.74)	−.26 (1.44)	−.18 (1.00)	.96 (2.10)	.48 (1.38)	1.04 (1.58)	−.04 (1.53)

In experiment 1, we used two different emotions, anger and sadness. While we were able to show that anger and sadness have differential effects on the use of country-of-origin information, it is not clear what mechanism is driving these differences. Although the appraisal measures suggest that agency attribution may explain the results, the control related to these emotions was only measured. However, anger and sadness may vary on other appraisals that were not measured in this study (e.g., arousal, attention, and effort). It is possible that some unique characteristics associated with the type of emotions featured (anger or sadness), such as physiological brain activity, might have led to our results. To address these issues, in experiment 2, we manipulate the agency attribution (human vs. situation control) within the same emotion, frustration. Using the same emotion and manipulating the two agency attributions helps us to uniquely identify the mechanism underlying the above effects.

EXPERIMENT 2

Frustration

Frustration was chosen because past research has shown that it is in the middle of the agency-control dimension: "Frustration was associated with moderately strong appraisals of both situational control and other-responsibility/control" (Smith and Ellsworth 1985, 833). The middle location suggests that frustration can be accompanied by an appraisal of human control under some conditions and an appraisal of situation control in other circumstances. For example, a student may feel frustrated for doing poorly on an exam for which she felt well prepared. The frustration may be accompanied by a high situational (impersonal) control if the student attributed the poor performance to a mysterious bad flu on the exam day or be accompanied by a high human control if she attributed it to the instructor for featuring examination questions that deviated significantly from the review guideline. This particular feature of frustration gives us the flexibility to induce this emotion with either situational control or human control and, thus, test the account of agency control using only one type of emotion. Based on our theorizing,

H4: Under human control, participants will evaluate the product more favorably when its country of origin is favorable (vs. unfavorable). While under situation control, country-of-origin information will not affect evaluations.

H5: Under human (vs. situation) control, participants will generate more country-of-origin-related thoughts. The valence of country-of-origin-related thoughts will be more favorable when country of origin is favorable (vs. unfavorable). In contrast, under situation (vs. human) control, participants will generate more attribute-related thoughts.

Method

One hundred and eighty-one participants were randomly assigned to conditions in a 2 (agency control: situation vs. human) × 2 (country of origin: Japan vs. Taiwan) × 2 (argument strength: strong vs. weak) between-subjects design. The experimental procedures and major dependent measures were identical to those in experiment 1. Participants in the situational-agency condition recalled the time when they felt intensely frustrated because of impersonal or situational factors, while participants in the human-agency condition recalled a frustrating time because of other people's speech or action (Keltner et al. 1993; Lerner et al. 2003). The target camera was described to be superior to the two competing brands on important features (e.g., picture quality) in the strong-argument condition but superior on less important features (e.g., color of the camera bag) in the weak-argument condition (Maheswaran, Mackie, and Chaiken 1992). As a check of the frustration manipulation, participants rated the level of their agreements to three statements: "I did not feel frustrated the slightest bit" (reverse scored), "I felt frustrated again when I recalled it," and "I felt frustrated even more strongly than ever before."

TABLE 2

EVALUATIONS (STANDARD DEVIATIONS) AND THOUGHTS AS A FUNCTION OF EMOTION, COUNTRY OF ORIGIN, AND PRODUCT DESCRIPTION: EXPERIMENT 2

	Frustration—situation agency				Frustration—human agency			
	Strong argument		Weak argument		Strong argument		Weak argument	
	Japan	Taiwan	Japan	Taiwan	Japan	Taiwan	Japan	Taiwan
Evaluations	5.05 (.81)	5.70 (.70)	3.74 (.72)	3.45 (1.09)	5.36 (.87)	5.01 (1.03)	4.02 (.89)	3.48 (.96)
Country-of-origin-related thoughts	.00 (.00)	.27 (.45)	.09 (.29)	.09 (.29)	.17 (.38)	.38 (.74)	.14 (.35)	.21 (.41)
Valenced index of country-of-origin-related thoughts	.00 (.00)	−.09 (.29)	.00 (.00)	−.04 (.21)	.04 (.21)	−.24 (.54)	.14 (.35)	−.13 (.34)
Attribute-related thoughts	4.33 (2.53)	4.14 (1.83)	4.73 (2.18)	3.86 (1.91)	4.30 (2.28)	2.86 (1.71)	4.18 (1.94)	3.04 (1.73)
Valenced index of attribute thoughts	1.91 (2.13)	2.14 (1.81)	1.50 (2.46)	1.04 (2.29)	1.61 (2.02)	1.33 (1.80)	1.73 (1.61)	1.54 (1.53)

The three items were averaged to form a frustration index ($\alpha = .73$).

Results and Discussion

Manipulation Checks. Participants experienced the same extent of frustration in all conditions (all p's $> .50$). Data revealed no significant effect (p's $> .10$) for the uncertainty index ($\alpha = .62$). In the human (vs. situation) agency condition, the human-control index ($\alpha = .75$) was significantly higher ($M_{\text{human}} = 4.94$ vs. $M_{\text{sit}} = 3.99$; $F(1, 173) = 13.60$, $p < .001$) and the situational-control measure was lower ($M_{\text{human}} = 2.75$ vs. $M_{\text{sit}} = 3.92$; $F(1, 173) = 21.74$, $p < .001$). A MANOVA with the average ratings of the three important and three less important attributes as a within-subject repeated measure revealed a significant effect of attributes ($M_{\text{imp}} = 6.27$ vs. $M_{\text{lessimp}} = 3.51$; $F(1, 173) = 866.66$, $p < .001$).

Evaluations. An ANOVA on the evaluation index ($\alpha = .93$) yielded a significant main effect of argument strength ($F(1, 172) = 145.46$, $p < .001$) and a significant control by country-of-origin interaction ($F(1, 172) = 5.34$, $p < .05$). Consistent with hypothesis 4, human-agency participants evaluated the target product more favorably when the country of origin was Japan (vs. Taiwan; $M_{\text{Japan}} = 4.69$ vs. $M_{\text{Taiwan}} = 4.25$; $F(1, 172) = 5.37$, $p < .05$). However, country of origin did not influence the evaluations of the situational-agency participants ($M_{\text{Japan}} = 4.40$ vs. $M_{\text{Taiwan}} = 4.57$; $F(1, 172) = .89$, $p > .30$).

Cognitive Responses. An ANOVA on the total number of thoughts yielded no significant effects ($M = 5.40$; $p > .11$). In accord with hypothesis 5, human (vs. situation) agency participants generated more country-of-origin-related thoughts ($M_{\text{human}} = .22$ vs. $M_{\text{sit}} = .11$; $F(1, 172) = 3.32$, $p < .10$) and fewer attribute-related thoughts ($M_{\text{human}} = 3.60$ vs. $M_{\text{sit}} = 4.26$; $F(1, 172) = 4.82$, $p < .05$). An ANOVA on the valenced index of country-of-origin-related thoughts revealed a control by country-of-origin interaction ($F(1,172) = 5.41$, $p < .05$). For human-agency participants, the valence index was more favorable if the product was manufactured in Japan (vs. Taiwan; $M_{\text{Japan}} = .09$ vs. $M_{\text{Taiwan}} = -.19$; $F(1, 172) = 19.28$, $p < .001$), while such a difference was not significant for situation-agency participants ($M_{\text{Japan}} = .00$ vs. $M_{\text{Taiwan}} = -.07$; $F(1, 172) = 1.22$, $p > .25$). The means and standard deviations are presented in table 2.

Consistent with our predictions, experiment 2 showed that frustrated participants who feel strongly that other people are responsible for the situation hold a country responsible for its products. Their product evaluations are influenced by the favorableness of the country of origin. In contrast, frustrated people who believe that the situation is beyond human control do not hold a country responsible for its products, and their evaluations are not influenced by the country of origin.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The two experiments featured in this research document the incidental effects of specific emotions on use of country-of-origin information in evaluations. This research also identifies agency control as the underlying dimension that determines country-of-origin effects under these emotions. These findings extend our knowledge of the emotional aspects of country-of-origin effects in several ways. Next, we discuss the contributions of this research to our understanding of country-of-origin effects and cognitive appraisals.

Extending Country-of-Origin Effects

Past research has examined the cognitive and motivational influences on country-of-origin effects. We extend these findings to suggest that specific incidental emotions also influence country-of-origin effects. We show that country-of-origin perceptions transcend product efficacy and may have their origins in social and political circumstances. Research has shown that consumers have animosity toward certain countries because of historical circumstances and that such animosity influences their subsequent purchase behavior (Klein et al. 1998). While we did not specifically examine

animosity effect, our findings could be construed as documenting the moderating role of incidental emotions on animosity. We show that animosity will only be observed when anger (vs. sadness) is induced. We also show that the cognitive appraisals associated with these emotions, such as agency control, will determine when animosity effects will be observed. Specifically, we suggest that the use of country perceptions in evaluations will depend on whether the perceiver attributes the event to the country or to a generalized turn of events that perpetrated them.

Emotions and Persuasion

Our research adds to the growing body of literature that contends that the effect of emotions on judgment extends beyond the valence of mood. It suggests that specific emotions such as anger, sadness, or frustration, despite sharing a common, negative valence, may have distinct effects on processing and judgments. We also reinforce the view that emotions have a carryover effect on evaluations. For example, emotions induced in one situation may influence judgments in another situation. Our findings provide converging evidence for the incidental effect of emotions in the context of country of origin (Tiedens and Linton 2001). In addition, our findings highlight the usefulness of understanding the cognitive consequences that are associated with different emotions. We show that such appraisals account for the observed differences of specific emotions that transcend valence effects. Past research has shown that anger induces heuristic processing and sadness promotes systematic processing. However, the underlying mechanism was not clearly understood (Bodenhausen et al. 1994). We show that the differential agency attribution that is associated with these emotions may account for these differences. We also provide insights on the effects of a new emotion, frustration, and demonstrate that the same emotion may lead to different outcomes, depending on the appraisals associated with them.

Limitations and Future Direction

A few issues that emerged from this research may merit further inquiry. First, although previous research has characterized sadness as an emotion associated more with uncertainty than anger, our research demonstrates that the major difference between the two emotions is agency control rather than uncertainty. In Smith and Ellsworth's (1985) multidimensional analysis, sadness is found in the middle of the uncertainty-certainty dimension, which suggests that certainty may not be a central dimension for sadness. Tiedens and Linton (2001) also characterize sadness as a malleable emotion that can be associated with both high and low uncertainty. In our research, whether the specific measurement on agency control has diluted the differences between anger and sadness measured on uncertainty merits further examination. Second, while past research may predict a reliable emotion by argument-quality interaction, it was not significant in our research. One possibility is that people engaged in relatively high levels of processing across emotional conditions. However, it is also likely that agency control specifically directed attention at country of origin, rather than influencing overall elaboration. Future research should examine when each of these mechanisms are likely to be present. Third, we examined negative emotions and provided a potential explanation for animosity effects. Country-of-origin research has shown that the perception of a country could induce either animosity or halo effects. As in animosity effects, the underlying process mechanisms driving halo effects have not been understood. It is likely that positive emotions could also have a differential effect on the use of country of origin. For example, happiness could induce a halo effect, or perception of the country that is more favorable than warranted by the facts. It would be useful to examine positive emotions and identify the relevant appraisals. In addition, the degree of sadness or anger may differ in each emotion group. Emotions may influence product evaluation through an affect-transfer process. Also, various contexts, situations, and motivations might lead consumers to experience different emotions that may then affect how consumers process information (Jain, Agrawal, and Maheswaran 2006; Jain et al. 2007; Maheswaran and Agrawal 2004). These effects need to be examined.

Finally, our findings suggest that, like brands, countries also have equity associated with them, termed "nation equity," that goes beyond product perceptions and may also have an emotional component. More important, we show that incidental emotions that are unrelated to product performance may lead to a focus on the nation where the product originated. This implies that nation equity may be vulnerable to incidental emotions and agency attributions arising from events that are beyond the immediate purview of a company. For example, political events, such as the conflict in the Middle East, may either lead to a country or situational attribution. Our findings suggest that if attributions were to be made to the country that has negative associations stemming from the conflict, it would lead to an unfavorable evaluation of the product. However, if the attributions were to be made to the situation, despite the negative associations to the country, it may not have an effect on product evaluations. For example, American Express, by virtue of its brand-name association to the United States, may be unfavorably evaluated if a segment of the current users in the Middle East attribute the conflict to the United States. Alternately, if the attribution were to be made to the situation, then American Express is not likely to be affected. Hence, companies should anticipate and minimize the effect of incidental emotions that are induced by national events by designing strategies that mitigate such emotional influences. Future research should investigate the various dimensions of nation equity and identify emotions and the related cognitive appraisal dimensions that are likely to dilute or enhance nation equity. Finally, a theoretical framework based on the concept of nation equity may facilitate the integration of disparate research in the domain of country-of-origin effects.

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